

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 have been examined. Claims 1-3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 4-6 are allowed and claim 7 contains allowable subject matter, but is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

I. General Remarks

The Examiner has not acknowledged the drawings filed on February 27, 2002. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate, in the next Office Action, whether such drawings are acceptable.

The Examiner has not indicated receipt of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 27, 2002. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner indicate consideration of the references listed in the February 27, 2002 Information Disclosure Statement in the next Office Action.

Also, in the September 7, 2005 Amendment, Applicant rewrote allowable claim 4 into independent form. Claim 4 was originally dependent upon claim 1 via claim 2. However, when claim 4 was rewritten into independent form, the recitations of claim 2 were inadvertently omitted from claim 4. Accordingly, Applicant has corrected the error herein.

II. Claims 1-3

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,069,883 to Ejzak et al. ("Ejzak").

A. Claim 1

By this Amendment, Applicant has incorporated the allowable subject matter of claim 7 into claim 1, and has canceled claim 7, without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

B. Claims 2 and 3

Due to the incorporation of claim 7 into claim 1, Applicant has also incorporated claim 2 therein, and canceled claim 2, without prejudice or disclaimer.

In regard to claim 3, Applicant submits that such claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency upon claim 1.

III. Newly Added Claim

Applicant has added claim 8 to provide more varied protection of the present invention. Applicant submits that claim 8 is patentable for at least analogous reasons as claim 1.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

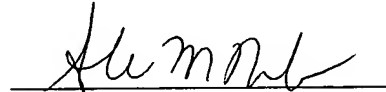
AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 10/083,302

Attorney Docket No.: Q68714

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison M. Tulino
Registration No. 48,294

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: **February 24, 2006**